

Woman killed in search for abducted Lagos PDP chair

EFFORTS by the Ogun State Police Command to rescue the Lagos State Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Mr. Philip Aivoji, and other targets of abduction by gunmen on Thursday turned tragic with the loss of one of the targets.

The victim, identified as 37 year old Bilikisu Kazeem, was hit by bullets in an exchange of gunfire between the security personnel deployed to rescue them and the bandits who ambushed them on the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway.

Four other targets were injured but their condition was said to be non-life threatening yesterday.

The search for Aivoji continues.

Spokesperson of the Ogun State Police Command, Omolola Odutola, in an update

From Ernest Nwokolo, Abeokuta/
Jide Babalola, Abuja

on the rescue effort said the gunmen unexpectedly took over the Bamboo area of the expressway at about 7pm on the fateful day, barricaded the road with articulated vehicles and started shooting indiscriminately.

This sparked commotion with motorists abandoning their vehicles and running into the bush.

The Superintendent of Police (SP) said: "The Divisional Police Officer of Isara Division in his strong commitment has successfully rescued nine out of ten persons from suspected kidnappers."

"Following a report received on the 25th of January 2024 at

about 1900hrs that suspected hoodlums emerged from the bush near Bamboo area of Ogun State inward Lagos State, along Lagos-Ibadan expressway. The yet to be identified gunmen barricaded the highway with articulated vehicles, blocking oncoming motorists and started firing indiscriminately, causing a state of commotion and panic which made motorists to abandon their vehicles and fled for safety into the bush.

"Based on the information, the Divisional Police Officer and his team swiftly raced to the scene together with an Army patrol team on transit, rapidly returned gunfire which aided the escape of nine kidnapped victims who later rejoined their vehicles and

continued their journey.

"A White Mazda Bus registered as LSR 288 XE was slightly damaged while Eunice Afolake Osalusi "f", Erinfolami Samuel "m", Obafemi Da Altantra "m" and Adeyinka Mathew sustained non-life threatening bullet injuries in their escape attempts. They are recuperating and stable in hospital.

"Sadly, one Bilikisu Kazeem "f" aged 37 years, gave up the ghost before getting to the hospital. Her remains were immediately collected by her relatives who were conveying her to the hospital, declining any autopsy examination from the police.

"One Philip Aivoji "m" whose identity was later given by those earlier rescued revealed he is the Lagos State PDP Chairman and is still held

captive, but covert operations are in place to ensure his release.

"Exhibits recovered include one AK47 Magazine containing 28 live ammunitions believed to belong to the hoodlums, handsets and car key. The items were handed over to their owners."

The police spokesperson said Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of operations had mobilised Tactical Commanders on joint operations with other security agencies on the directives of the Commissioner of Police, CP Alamu Abiodun on tracking mission, to rescue Aivoji.

PDP demands Aivoji's release

The National Publicity Secretary of the PDP, Mr. Debo Ologunagba, yesterday demanded the immediate release of Aivoji.

He expressed concern over the victim's well-being and safety, especially considering his age.

Ologunagba condemned the spate of kidnap for ransom, mindless killings, marauding of communities and other acts of terrorism across the country.

He said that the ugly trend called for urgent action by President Bola Tinubu to ensure the release of all those held in kidnappers' dens in various parts of the country.

"The alarming situation is an agonising confirmation that the

security intelligence, command, operation and coordination structure under President Tinubu has collapsed," he said.

But he expressed appreciation for the "efforts of our gallant men and women in uniform for their patriotism, courage and determination in the fight against terrorism, kidnapping and other social vices in spite of daunting challenges."

He asked the security high command to take urgent steps to secure the release of Aivoji and all other Nigerians trapped in abductors' camps in various parts of the country.

APC chieftain berates PDP for blaming Tinubu

A former acting National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Mr. Hillard Etta, said the PDP was wrong to blame Tinubu for Aivoji's abduction.

"I think PDP is just like a struggling shadow with ineffectual movements that make no impact. It has become very clear that PDP does not have the capacity to play the role of a viral, constructive opposition party, so they are clutching at all straws like a drowning person," Etta said in reaction to the PDP statement.

He added: "Rather than making wild goose chases and lame statements, they should pull themselves together so that they can be taken seriously by Nigerians."



Naval Chief Ogalla faces probe